



# East Central Idaho News

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON & TETON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The unemployment rate for the Idaho Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area remained constant at 2.6 percent in December as shown in East Central Idaho Table 1. The labor force increased by 170 while total unemployed was down 40. Seasonal activity opened up temporary retail jobs. Retail trade and health care were the only industries to show monthly job increases. The area's unemployment rate remained unchanged year-over-year. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the region, recorded a 2.7 percent unemployment rate, down two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month and up one-tenth of a percentage point from the same time last year.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: Annual Labor Force

The Idaho Falls region's preliminary annual unemployment rate of 2.7 percent for 2006 is the lowest of Idaho's five metropolitan areas. With an average labor force of 61,880 — 60,220 of those employed — the area is strong, vibrant and growing. The average labor force increased by almost 2,000 from 2005, and the unemployment rate was two-tenths of a percentage point lower. A look at the nine counties in east central Idaho shows an average low annual unemployment rate of 2.8 percent, down three-tenths of a point from the same time last year. Over the year, the nine counties saw an increase of almost 2,500 in the labor force.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- The Eagle Rock Art Guild opened a new art center in Idaho Falls after a 15-year search for a permanent home. The 3,300-square-foot center is within walking distance of the Willowtree Gallery, the Art Museum, Elegance in Art and the Carr Gallery at the Willard Arts Center. It is in the same location previously occupied by

East Central Idaho Table 1: Idaho Falls MSA Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville and Jefferson counties

	Dec 2006*	Nov 2006	Dec 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	61,720	61,550	60,680	0.3	1.7
Unemployment	1,590	1,630	1,600	-2.5	-0.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.6	2.6	2.6		
Total Employment	60,130	59,930	59,080	0.3	1.8
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	61,590	61,700	60,790	-0.2	1.3
Unemployment	1,500	1,460	1,450	2.7	3.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.4	2.4	2.4		
Total Employment	60,090	60,240	59,340	-0.2	1.3
<b>JOB BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	<b>54,560</b>	<b>54,790</b>	<b>53,490</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	<i>7,620</i>	<i>7,770</i>	<i>7,270</i>	<i>-1.9</i>	<i>4.8</i>
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	50	0.0	-80.0
Construction	4,260	4,410	3,890	-3.4	9.5
Manufacturing	3,350	3,350	3,330	0.0	0.6
Food Manufacturing	1,090	1,080	1,060	0.9	2.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	240	240	250	0.0	-4.0
Machinery Manufacturing	150	150	150	0.0	0.0
Other Manufacturing	1,870	1,880	1,870	-0.5	0.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	<i>46,940</i>	<i>47,020</i>	<i>46,220</i>	<i>-0.2</i>	<i>1.6</i>
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,900	13,870	13,470	0.2	3.2
Wholesale Trade	4,240	4,290	4,180	-1.2	1.4
Retail Trade	7,920	7,850	7,650	0.9	3.5
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,690	1,680	1,590	0.6	6.3
Information	1,200	1,200	1,180	0.0	1.7
Financial Activities	2,130	2,130	2,140	0.0	-0.5
Professional & Business Services	9,190	9,270	9,480	-0.9	-3.1
Educational & Health Services	7,210	7,180	6,790	0.4	6.2
Leisure & Hospitality	4,310	4,320	4,420	-0.2	-2.5
Other Services	1,970	2,010	2,040	-2.0	-3.4
Government Education	3,570	3,620	3,470	-1.4	2.9
Government Administration	3,460	3,420	3,230	1.2	7.1

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

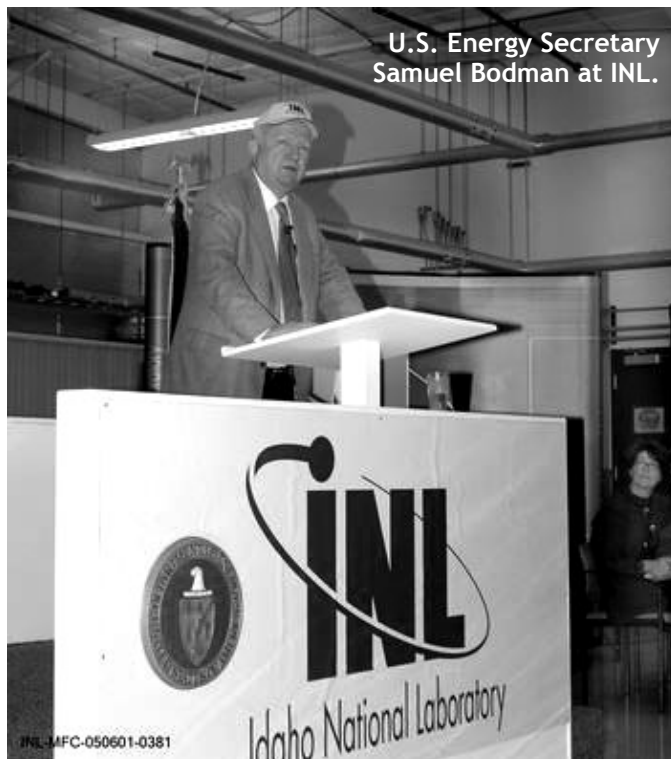
The Cracked Pot. Art shows, contests and classes is the focus rather than sales. Operating expenses are covered by proceeds from the annual Sidewalk Art Show, donations, grants and membership dues.

- District 7 Health Department is now called Eastern Idaho Public Health. The department is rolling out the name with a new logo, Web site and e-mail addresses along with the new building that will be completed in September. The change came about for several reasons. Of the state's seven public health districts, District 7 was the

only one without a name reflecting the geographic area it covers. It was also changed to differentiate it from the other agencies that serve the area with similar names. All of the health districts are charged with preventing disease, promoting healthy habits and protecting the environment.

- The Sunnyside Road project has passed one more hurdle. H-K Contractors was the lone bidder for street widening between Yellowstone Highway and Holmes Avenue. The contract sets an Oct. 30 deadline for completion.
- KUPI's AM radio station has changed its format to Spanish from classic country. The 99.1 FM station still carries the latest county music, but now 980 AM will air all-Spanish music and advertising except for local athletic events such as Idaho Falls high school games, American Legion tournaments, Utah Jazz games, University of Idaho games and Idaho Falls Chukars contests. Keith Walker remains the station's general manager. The program director is long-time disc jockey Domingo Muñoz, who will continue as one of four DJ's at the station. The move reflects the growth of the area's Hispanic population. Other local Spanish stations are KIGO 1400 AM in St. Anthony and KBLI 1620 AM in Blackfoot.
- The Idaho National Laboratory and British company Nexia Solutions, a subsidiary of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd., are collaborating at the encouragement of the U.S. Department of Energy and the British government. The two will develop the next generation of recycling processes for nuclear plants, which supports the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership. The partnership is part of President Bush's initiative to develop worldwide consensus on using economical, carbon-free nuclear energy to meet growing electricity demand. Nexia's head of U.S. operations will live in Idaho Falls. With this new mission, Nexia will become Britain's national laboratory. The energy partnership aims to put the U.S. out front in worldwide nuclear energy efforts.
- Kohl's department store will open in Ammon on April 9. The company recently finished hiring the new staff at Idaho Falls' Commerce & Labor office and started training its employees this month. Kohl's, based in Menomonee Falls, Wis., will have 834 stores in 46 states by the end of April. The company markets itself as a family-focused, value-oriented specialty department store. It offers moderately-priced national brand apparel, shoes, accessories, beauty and home products. Kohl's offers competitive wages and employee benefits including a 401 (k) plan, employee stock ownership, medical insurance and merchandise discounts.

- Walgreen's opened a new store in Ammon at the end of February. This is the company's second store in the Idaho Falls area.
- A new seafood restaurant is in the works for Taylor Crossing on the River. The Idaho Falls Planning Commission will consider the proposal during its March meeting. A Taylor Crossing marketing official said it will be an upscale establishment and will feature a deck overlooking the Snake River. A name has not been announced.



- The Idaho National Laboratory broke ground on its \$14 million Center for Advanced Energy Studies building in February. The program will bring government, private industry and academia together to produce a new generation of people to help solve energy problems throughout the world. U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman announced the project for Idaho Falls in 2005. The 50,000-square-foot building, scheduled to be finished by July 2008, will be located on the north side of the University Place campus in Idaho Falls. The center will focus on nuclear energy along with biofuels, geothermal power and hydropower. The building will consist of laboratories, offices, meeting rooms and classrooms. It will be a core resource center to the world.

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